
Executive On-Camera Video Production Guide

A Production Framework for Corporate Leadership

Straight-to-Camera // Single Camera // 2-Hour Shoot

PREPARED FOR YOUR PRODUCTION TEAM CONFIDENTIAL // DO NOT DISTRIBUTE

SECTION 01

Project Overview

This document is a production framework for a high-end corporate straight-to-camera video shoot featuring executive leadership. The goal is to capture authentic, confident, and compelling on-camera delivery of organizational priorities, leadership vision, and annual benchmarks over a two-hour single-camera session.

FORMAT	Straight-to-camera, single camera, talking head
DURATION	2-hour shoot session per participant
PURPOSE	Leadership priorities, vision, annual benchmarks
TONE	Confident, direct, warm — not scripted or stiff
OUTPUT	Edited segments per topic, full-length options

SECTION 02

High-End Production Approach

What separates a professional corporate video from a standard internal recording is preparation, environment, and the ability to draw out natural, confident delivery from executives who may not be accustomed to being on camera.

Camera & Technical Setup

- Single camera, locked-off on tripod — creates a clean, authoritative frame.
- Eye-level placement, slight camera tilt down (2-3 degrees) — flattering and commanding.
- Lens: 85mm or 100mm prime — compresses background, keeps subject sharp.
- Shallow depth of field — subject sharp, background softly blurred. Avoid busy backgrounds.
- Interviewer sits directly behind or beside the lens so eyeline is near-camera.
- Mark the floor — subject should not shift position between setups.

Lighting

- Key light at 45 degrees, slightly above eye level — eliminates harsh shadows.
- Soft box or beauty dish preferred for C-suite talent — flattering and professional.
- Fill light or reflector on the opposite side — ratio 2:1 or 3:1 max.
- Avoid overhead fluorescent — kills skin tone. Bring your own.
- Background separation light if space allows — prevents flat, 2D look.

Audio

- Lavalier microphone hidden under clothing — clean, invisible.
- Boom mic as backup if lav placement is limited by wardrobe.
- Room tone recorded at top of session — critical for editing.
- Kill all HVAC and background noise sources before rolling.

SECTION 03

Session Structure (2-Hour Shoot)

A structured shoot day protects the executive's time, ensures all topics are covered, and creates natural editorial segments in post-production. Never shoot two consecutive hours without structure — you will lose energy, focus, and usable footage.

TIME	ACTIVITY	NOTES
0:00 - 0:20	Setup & Wardrobe Check	Mic placement, lighting match to wardrobe color, quick monitor review with subject
0:20 - 0:30	Camera Warm-Up / Off-Camera Conversation	Get subject comfortable and talking naturally. Do not discuss questions yet. Get them relaxed and talking.
0:30 - 0:50	Block 1 — Vision & Leadership	Open-ended prompts about role, philosophy, and where the org is heading. Warm-up territory
0:50 - 1:00	Break	Water, touch-up. Review any pickups from Block 1 while energy is high.
1:00 - 1:25	Block 2 — Priorities & Benchmarks	More content. Specific goals, initiatives, what success looks like this year.
1:25 - 1:35	Block 3 — Culture & Team	Tone shift — softer, more human. Team acknowledgment, values, what they're proud of.
1:35 - 1:50	Pickups & Repeat Answers	Re-shoot any stumbles, off-axis responses, or incomplete answers from all blocks.
1:50 - 2:00	Wrap & Closing Statements	Direct-to-camera closing remarks. Keep short. These are gold for end-of-video use.

SECTION 04

Preparing Your Subject

The most common failure point in executive video is under-preparation. Not because the subject does not know their content — they do. It is because they have never been coached on how to deliver it naturally to a lens. These preparation steps close that gap.

Two Options for Delivery Method

OPTION A Talking Points (Recommended)	Give the subject 5-7 brief bullet points per topic the morning of the shoot. No full sentences. They internalize the
OPTION B Q&A Format (Natural Fallback)	Interviewer (off-camera) asks prepared questions one at a time. Subject is coached to answer without referencing

Day-Of Coaching Notes for the Producer

- Before rolling: "We are going to do this as many times as you need. There is no pressure."
- After the first stumble: "Perfect — that is exactly what pickups are for. Reset and go again."
- If energy drops: Stop. Take 3 minutes. Get the subject moving — stand up, shake out.
- Watch for "reading eyes" — if subject glances up-left mid-sentence, they are reciting. Pause and reset.
- Best takes often happen on take 3 or 4. Do not stop at take 1 even if it seems fine.
- Use silences. Do not rush to the next question. Let the subject fill the air — often gold.



Executive Prompt Library

These prompts are designed to draw out natural, editorial-ready responses. The producer reads one prompt aloud. The subject answers directly to camera. Coach subjects to begin responses with a complete thought — not "yeah" or "so..."

Block 1 — Leadership Vision & Role

1

Tell us who you are and what you lead.

Coach: Answer in 2-3 sentences. State your title, team, and what you are accountable for.

2

What does success look like for your organization this year?

Coach: Specific over general. Name one or two things that would make this year a clear win.

3

What is the single most important shift happening in your space right now?

Coach: This can be internal or external. Name the trend, then say what it means for you.

4

What does good leadership look like on your team?

Coach: Give a real example if possible. Behaviors, not values-speak.

5

What do you want your team to understand about where you are taking this?

Coach: Speak directly to your people. Imagine they will watch this.

6

What keeps you focused when things get hard?

Coach: One specific thing. Avoid generics like "my team" or "the mission."

Block 2 — Priorities & Annual Benchmarks

1

Walk us through your top 3 priorities for the year.

Coach: Number them. For each: what it is, why it matters, what action it requires.

2

What benchmarks will tell you this year is working?

Coach: Be specific. Numbers, milestones, outcomes — not feelings.

3

What initiative are you most excited about right now, and why?

Coach: Pick one. Energy and specificity matter more than comprehensiveness.

4

Where is your team investing the most energy in the next 90 days?

Coach: Near-term and concrete. Helps viewers understand current focus.

5

What does it mean to hit the mark this year — not just check the box?

Coach: Push past the obvious. What would excellence actually look like?

6

What are you building toward that goes beyond this year?

Coach: Paint a longer picture. One paragraph on where this is all going.

Block 3 — Culture, Team & Closing

1

What are you most proud of about your team right now?

Coach: Specific. Name what they have done or who they are. Not generic praise.

2

What does the culture on your team feel like, and how did you build it?

Coach: Concrete examples. What behaviors define it? What did you do to create it?

3

What do you want someone new to this organization to know?

Coach: Practical and human. Think: what would I tell my first-week self here?

4

Is there anything you want to say directly to the people you lead?

Coach: This is the most powerful prompt. Give space. Let them be human.

5

What is the thing you are most looking forward to in the year ahead?

Coach: Closing energy. Optimistic and forward. End on something real, not PR.

6

If you had to name one thing that drives everything else — what is it?

Coach: One sentence closer. This is the pull quote. Take multiple takes.

SECTION 06

Producer Direction Notes

Silence is a tool.

After the subject finishes an answer, wait 3 full seconds before moving on. They will often add the best line unprompted.

"Say that again, but start with..."	The single most useful redirect. Gets a clean answer without the subject feeling like they failed. Use constantly.
Watch the hands.	Nervous energy shows in the hands. If they are gripping or fidgeting, pause and give them something to do — hold a glass of water, rest hands on knees.
Re-ask without apologizing.	Never say "that was great BUT..." Just say "Let's do that one more time with a little more energy" or "Start from the benchmark line."
"Forget I'm here."	Tell the subject: "Imagine the person you most want to hear this is sitting right where that lens is. Talk to them." Kills self-consciousness immediately.
Energy management.	Schedule the most important content when the subject is freshest — typically in the first 30-40 minutes after warm-up. Do not save the best for last.

SECTION 07

Post-Production Notes

Structure the edit to support the communication goal — not to document everything that was said. Executive video lives or dies in the edit.

- Cut on the thought, not the sentence — edit for meaning, not for clean in/out points.
- L-cuts and J-cuts smooth over hesitations and re-starts without jump cuts.
- Color grade: warm skin tones, subtle lift in shadows — never cold or clinical.
- Lower thirds: name, title, organization — simple, consistent typographic treatment.
- Music underscore (optional): sparse, no melody — texture only. Melody fights the voice.
- Segment structure: each block can stand alone as a 90-second cut OR string together for a full-length piece.
- Export deliverables: 16:9 master, 9:16 vertical recut, 1:1 square for social.

"The best corporate video does not look like a corporate video."